

Nigeria: Mourning begins after plane crash

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Lagos - Nigeria began three days of mourning on Monday after a plane carrying 153 people plunged into a residential area of Nigeria's largest city of Lagos on Sunday, with all those aboard presumed dead.

The plane, which was flying to Lagos from the capital Abuja, crashed near the airport, damaging buildings and setting off an inferno in the poor and densely populated neighbourhood.

Several people were believed to have been killed on the ground, an emergency official said, while 10 burnt bodies were removed from a damaged building in the area, which was littered with plane debris including a broken wing.

President Goodluck Jonathan declared three days of national mourning and pledged a full investigation into Sunday afternoon's disaster involving a plane operated by domestic carrier Dana Air.

Chaos broke out after the crash, with rescue workers facing large crowds and aggressive soldiers while trying to access smouldering wreckage in the hunt for survivors.

The cause of the crash of the Boeing MD83 was unclear, but the emergency official as well as an aviation official said the cockpit recorder had been located and handed over to police.

Skies were cloudy at the time of the crash, but there had been no rain.

Nigeria has a spotty aviation record, although Dana had been considered to be a relatively safe and reasonably efficient domestic airline since it began operating in 2008.

Officials confirmed that no survivors from the plane had been found by Sunday evening, but said search operations were continuing.

- AFP



People gather at the site of a plane crash in Lagos, Nigeria. (AP)

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